



**GAIL FARBER  
CHAIR**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/  
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE  
900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
P.O. BOX 1460, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460  
[www.lacountyiswmtf.org](http://www.lacountyiswmtf.org)**

April 20, 2009

Ms. Margo Reid Brown, Chair  
California Integrated Waste Management Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

Dear Ms. Brown:

**COMMENTS REGARDING INTERIM REPORT FOR LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT OF  
ORGANICS DIVERSION ALTERNATIVES**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force, I want to thank the California Integrated Waste Management Board (Waste Board) for the opportunity to comment on the interim report for the Life Cycle Assessment of Organics Diversion Alternatives, entitled "Facilities Data Collection Approach and Results for the Life Cycle Assessment and Economic Analysis of Organic Waste Management and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Options," dated March 27, 2009.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities within with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a Countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

We have reviewed the interim report and offer the following comments/concerns.

**1. Greenwaste Alternative Daily Cover**

The study is fundamentally flawed in dismissing the use of greenwaste Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) as a legal and viable diversion alternative and equating it with disposal. Assembly Bill 1647 (Bustamante, 1996) made a distinction between greenwaste used as ADC and that of disposal and recognized the significant benefits of greenwaste ADC in reducing operating costs, conserving landfill capacity, and providing an environmentally sound diversion option. In fact, the preliminary findings of a study currently being conducted by the Center for the Study of Sustainable Use of Resources at Columbia University indicates that windrow composting has higher adverse effects in comparison to greenwaste ADC (copy enclosed).

It's imperative that greenwaste ADC remains a legal and viable diversion alternative since it's among the highest environmentally sound option. It promotes a healthy and diverse solid waste infrastructure to manage the sheer volume of greenwaste generated and prevents the State from becoming over dependent on a few arbitrarily chosen options. This diversity allows the marketplace to remain cost competitive, limits risks due to fluctuation in the marketplace, and promotes a progressive marketplace.

In addition, to enable decision makers to make informed decisions regarding organic waste management and evaluate the true costs of various options, the interim report should be expanded to include the environmental and economic consequences of eliminating the use of greenwaste ADC as a viable diversion alternative, such as, but not limited to:

- Increasing soil mining for use as ADC;
- Decreasing the decomposition rate of the solid waste disposed in the landfill;
- Transportation impacts (e.g., increased traffic congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emission) as a result of transporting greenwaste to out-of region composting facilities; and,

- Transportation impacts (e.g., increased traffic congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emission) as a result of transporting the compost material to end users.

The above impacts must be evaluated since they are acute to Southern California where greenwaste ADC has been a vital diversion alternative due to inadequate processing capacity for greenwaste and a limited market for compost.

## **2. Emerging Technologies as a Diversion Alternative**

The interim report limits its scope of technologies to anaerobic digestion, biomass-to-energy, and waste-to-energy. As indicated in RTI International's February 2, 2009, presentation, one goal is to "develop transparent, consistent, and objective data to characterize alternatives on an equal basis". If that is the case, then all technologies, including the broad range of conversion technologies, must be considered on a level playing field. Therefore, the interim report must be expanded to recognize the findings of:

- The Waste Board's own three-year study on conversion technologies conducted pursuant to AB 2770, Chapter 740 of the 2002 State Statutes;
- The conversion technology efforts by the County of Los Angeles ([www.SoCalConversion.org](http://www.SoCalConversion.org));
- The State Bioenergy Action Plan; and,
- The State Interagency Bioenergy Working Group.

Selectively choosing technologies limits progress and development of "green" technologies in California and is in direct contrast to many of the State's progressive environmental and energy goals and the State's goal to create highly skilled jobs.

## **3. Greater Sampling Population**

The number of facilities surveyed is too small to provide meaningful and representative data for the study. For example, of the 155 landfills, 185 chipping/grinding facilities, and 50 composting facilities in California, only 23, 6, and 16 facilities, respectively, were selected as survey candidates. Of this limited pool of potential participants, only a handful of

Ms. Margo Reid Brown  
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facilities responded to the survey. In order for the interim report to provide accurate greenhouse gas emission data and cost savings, if any, from the data collected, the sampling effort must be carefully reevaluated to determine whether this very small sample size will yield statistically accurate data.

The Task Force appreciates your consideration and respectfully requests a written response to this letter as well as the August 21, 2008, and December 8, 2008, letters (copies enclosed) regarding the same subject as expeditiously as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Clark*

Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and  
Mayor, City of Rosemead

LL:cw  
P:\Sec\Taskforce\Organics LCA

Enc.

cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Cal EPA Secretary, Linda Adams  
Each Member of the California Integrated Waste Management Board  
California Integrated Waste Management Board (Mark Leary, Ted Rauh,  
Bobbie Garcia)  
California State Association of Counties  
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San Gabriel Valley Counsel of Governments  
Gateway Cities Counsel of Governments  
Southern California Association of Governments  
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County  
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force



**Interim Progress Report of Center for Sustainable Use of Resources (SUR),  
Earth Engineering Center of Columbia University**

**SUR Project Title: Comparison of Use of Green Wastes as Alternative Daily  
Cover in Regulation Landfills and by Composting in Open Windrows and In-  
vessel Systems**

Report by N.J. Themelis; LCA study by Rob van Haaren; co-PI: Morton Barlaz

***Summary of results to date - March 23, 2009***

This study is part of a SUR project to identify the best available technology for processing green wastes. It consists of two parts: an in-depth study of the tonnages of green wastes processed by various aerobic composting methods and a multi-criteria analysis (MCA) to identify the best of these methods; and a comparison of the environmental impacts of using green wastes as feedstock for aerobic composting or as Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) in regulation landfills.

The BioCycle-Columbia study of 2006 data showed that 22.7 million tons of the organic fraction of MSW in the U.S. were composted or mulched, that is about 5.5% of the total MSW generated. This number is 1.7 million tons greater than the 2004 estimate. The tonnages processed by various aerobic composting methods (windrow, static aerated pile, in-vessel) were not documented in the BioCycle survey. However, it is known that the dominant, and least costly, method is windrow composting. Also, there is insufficient data on the tonnage of food wastes processed but EPA has estimated that only 0.7 million tons of food wastes were composted in 2006. Including the food fraction in the feedstock to the composting process is beneficial for the subsequent use of the compost product, because of its high nutrient content. However it is not recommended for open air windrow composting because of undesirable odors.

The MCA study of SUR consists of assessing environmental impacts, investment and operating costs and associated effects, such as odors and use of land, in order to determine the best available aerobic composting technology. The environmental impact assessment is carried out by means of a Lifecycle Analysis (LCA) using the Eco-indicators-99 methodology of the SimaPro software that was developed in the E.U. by Pre Consultants and is used widely in Europe and the U.S. This program is described in detail at [www.pre.nl/simapro.html](http://www.pre.nl/simapro.html).

The inventory of emissions needed to carry out the LCA study was developed by combining life-cycle inventories from published papers and emission studies for

windrow composting and also for regulation landfills. However, the dataset for air and water emissions of the Gore-technology (aerated static pile) has not been completed as yet. The Gore-Tex technology is less costly than in-vessel composting and is increasingly being used in U.S. composting facilities.

The chart of Figure 1 below shows the results of the environmental impact assessment of three green-waste composting methods: Windrow Composting (WC), Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) and In-vessel aerobic Page: 2 composting (INV). The horizontal zero-line on the y-axis denotes that bars above this line represent adverse effects on the environment and bars below beneficial effects. The units on the y-axis of the SimaPro graph are called "ecopoints". The Ecopoint score is a measure of the overall environmental impact of a particular product or process. Very roughly, the total environmental impact by all anthropogenic activities in the E.U., divided by the E.U. population, is considered to be equal to 100 Ecopoints per person.

Originally, this system was developed for assisting the Swiss government to compare the total effect of different types of environmental impacts. For example, starting from the top of the left bar on Figure 1, the dark blue bar denotes acidification and eutrophication effects, the light blue bar climate change, the yellow respiratory effects, and the light brown bar avoided use of fossil fuels. In order to compare effects in different categories, weighing factors are used which may be somewhat subjective. For example, the release of 1 kg of NO<sub>3</sub> (eutrophication) in water may be comparable to the release of 5 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere (climate change). However, the most important use of these graphs is the comparison of the effects between each method. For example, acidification is 8 times more severe in windrow composting as in in-vessel aerobic composting because in the latter the composting gases are captured and cleaned in biofilter systems.

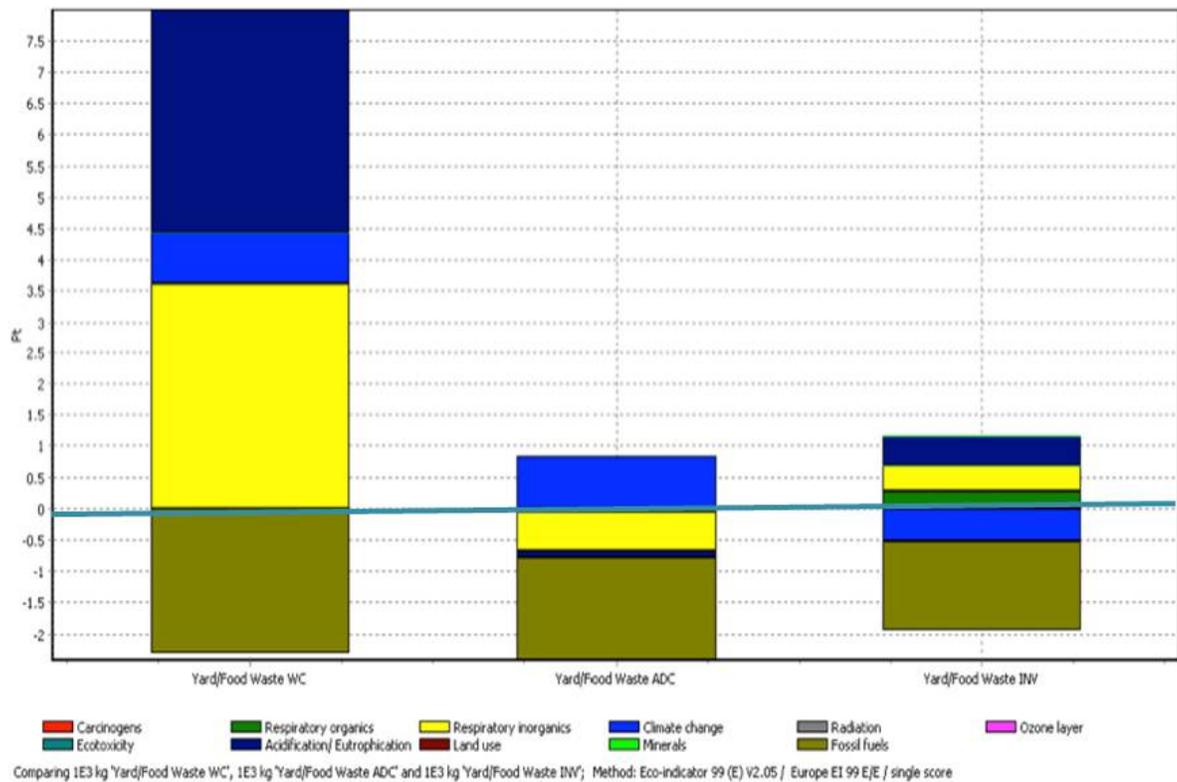


Figure 1. Comparison of environmental impacts of *windrow composting*, *ADC use in regulation landfills*, and *in-vessel composting* of green wastes. The functional unit for the LCA comparison is one ton of green wastes.

It can be seen from Figure 1 that, according to the LCA, windrow composting method has higher adverse effects than use of green wastes as Alternative Daily Cover (ADC). The principal reason for the beneficial effect of using green wastes as ADC is that one ton of shredded yard wastes replaces nearly six tons of soil that, according to EPA regulations for sanitary landfills, must be used as daily cover on the surface of a working cell. The regulation requires a 15-cm (six-inch) daily cover of soil. Several California landfills use a 23-cm (9-inch) ADC cover of yard wastes in place of soil.

It is evident that much less effort, and use of motorized equipment, is needed to shred and spread one ton of green wastes than by digging up and spreading six tons of soil. The use of green wastes ADC has the additional advantage that it increases the capacity of a landfill cell because the nine inches of shredded green waste cover per day are eventually compacted into less than one inch, while there is relatively little compaction of the six inches of soil that must be used daily, as per EPA

regulation. Therefore, the use of green wastes ADC results in saving of landfill space and, consequently, land used for landfilling.

A beneficial factor for both windrow and in-vessel composting is that the compost product can be used as a low-quality fertilizer. This study estimated that one metric ton of green wastes replaces 16 kg of N-Fertilizer, 2.4 kg of P-Fertilizer and 6.4 of K-Fertilizer, both in windrow composting and in-vessel aerobic composting . The principal advantage of in-vessel over windrow composting is that the latter is not fully aerobic: Parts of the composting material within the core of the pile reacts anaerobically emitting a gas similar to landfill gas but at a much lower quantity. This gas is not captured and therefore results in high ratings in the acidification/eutrophication, climate change, and respiratory ailments categories.

The ADC scenario was based on a state-of-the-art sanitary landfill that collects leachate from the MSW and captures landfill gas within five years after starting a landfill cell. Therefore, no water emissions were included in this scenario. The fossil fuel benefit results from the avoided soil excavation and from LFG collection. Green wastes are used instead of soil as daily cover of the landfill. An estimated 82% fraction of the methane generated in such a cell is collected by the LFG recovery system and is used in a gas engine to generate electricity (thus avoiding the use of fossil fuels).

In the in-vessel composting scenario, the energy used to compost and cure one ton of green waste is lower than the avoided use of energy for producing an equivalent amount of fertilizers. Therefore, the overall effect is positive for the environment, in terms of net fossil fuel use.

It is expected that the MCA and LCA studies of SUR will be completed by May 2009.

NJT, March 24, 2009



**GAIL FARBER  
CHAIRPERSON**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
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December 8, 2008

Ms. Margo Reid Brown, Chair  
California Integrated Waste Management Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

Dear Ms. Brown:

**DISCUSSION OF ORGANICS POLICY ROADMAPS I AND II  
CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING  
AGENDA ITEM 8, DECEMBER 16, 2008**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force, we respectfully request the California Integrated Waste Management Board (Waste Board) respond to our August 13 and 21, 2008 letters (copies enclosed) expressing significant concerns regarding the Waste Board's direction to rely primarily on composting to reduce organics in the waste stream (50% by 2020), rather than adopting a diversified and pragmatic strategy. By adopting strategies in addition to composting (which has significant shortcomings including siting difficulties; the need for large acreage of land; odor, air quality/greenhouse gas emission, and water quality concerns; lack of markets for end products due to product inconsistencies; and permitting/regulatory hurdles), California's solid waste infrastructure would be better insulated from shifting and often uncontrolled factors such as those relating to global markets.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities within Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of 10 million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste

management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

On December 9, 2008, the Waste Board's Strategic Policy Development Committee will be discussing Agenda Item C (Waste Board Item 8), Organics Policy Roadmaps I and II. According to the staff report, the Waste Board will be continuing its discussions from June 2008. Based on our review of the staff report, we were disheartened to learn that our comments expressed in letters dated August 13 and 21, 2008 were not addressed, let alone responded to. As detailed in these letters, the Task Force requests the Waste Board to:

- 1. Define the terms "Organic" and "Compostable Organic" since they are not defined by statute, regulation or the Waste Board Strategic Directive 6.1.** Defining these terms is critical to the overall conversation especially since there is wide disagreement within the Waste Board itself on what these terms mean. For example, the staff report for this Item indicates organics account for 23 million tons of the disposal waste stream (approximately 55%) while the June 17, 2008 (Item 10) staff report states "organic materials comprise over 30% of the waste stream deposited in California landfills." Further, based on the Statewide Waste Characterization Study released by the Waste Board in December 2004, the "organic" fraction of solid waste disposed in California landfills ranges between 70 and 80 percent. Therefore, clear and distinct definitions are needed to avoid confusion among the legislature and regulatory bodies, regulated communities, and local governments which ultimately bear the cost of meeting the 50% organic reduction goal by 2020 as stipulated by the Waste Board Strategic Directive 6.1.

Furthermore, it is also very important that the Waste Board identify which organic waste stream category it is targeting for reduction. Based on the Waste Board December 11, 2007, Agenda Item 15, it appears that the goal is focused on composting/diverting source separated streams, such as green waste, food waste, manure, etc., and not the total "organics" currently being disposed of in landfills. If the latter is true, jurisdictions in California may be faced with achieving a mandatory back door diversion rate of approximately 85 percent by 2020.

- 2. Consider the findings of State and local efforts confirming that conversion technologies (green high tech technologies utilized in Europe and Japan which convert post-recycled solid waste into renewable energy, useful products, and green fuels) are capable of managing organic material in an environmentally sustainable manner.** According to the Waste Board's own

three-year study on conversion technologies (prepared at the request of the Legislature, Assembly Bill 2770, 2002 Statutes) and numerous other parallel studies, conversion technologies have been demonstrated to have numerous tangible benefits, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, waste transportation, and landfill disposal; displacing fossil fuels by producing fuel, energy, and other products; and, creating green-collar jobs. By including conversion technologies in the "tool box" it will help ensure the attainment of the desired organic reduction goal. Otherwise, the Waste Board will continue to be focused on "soft" solutions such as forming more committees and conducting unnecessary duplicative studies and solely emphasizing a favored-technology. Such a direction is not consistent with Governor Schwarzenegger's statement/position that "Turning waste products into energy is good for the state's economy, local job creation, and our environment. By implementing biomass programs in California, we will help fight critical waste-disposal and environmental problems, including the risk of wildfires, air pollution from open field burning, and greenhouse gas emission from landfills."

- 3. Work closely with local jurisdictions in formulating State policy to reduce green waste alternative daily cover (ADC).** The use of greenwaste as ADC has numerous environmental and economic benefits, including: preventing the mining and wasting of clean soil that would have otherwise been used as daily cover; conserving landfill capacity, by avoiding an additional cover material layer and the ability of green waste to compact and decompose over time; creating markets for the beneficial use of green waste; maintaining a local outlet for the beneficial use of greenwaste; and strengthening the curbside collection infrastructure for greenwaste. These benefits are especially important in Southern California since there is inadequate processing capacity for green waste and a limited market for compost made from greenwaste due to difficulties encountered in permitting/developing these types of facilities. This is particularly acute in urban areas due to lack of suitable land, stringent air quality regulations, and community reluctance towards the proximity of such facilities. Even if such facilities were developed elsewhere, greenwaste would still need to be transported over long distances, leading to higher trash rates and added traffic congestion and air pollution.

Although the formulation of State policy to reduce green waste ADC would significantly impact cities and counties, to date, the Waste Board has largely ignored seeking input from them. For example, the ADC Policy Workgroup convened by the Waste Board earlier this year to formulate ADC recommendations to the Waste Board was comprised of selected members from

Ms. Margo Reid Brown  
December 8, 2008  
Page 4

the private sector and environmental interest groups with virtually no local government representation. Thus, it is imperative that the Waste Board be inclusive in its solicitation for input rather than "selective" input.

Due to the gravity of the concerns expressed, we respectfully request a written response to this letter as well as the August 13 and 21, 2008 letters as expeditiously as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and  
Council Member, City of Rosemead

LL:

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Enc.

cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Cal EPA Secretary, Linda Adams  
Each Member of the California Integrated Waste Management Board  
California Integrated Waste Management Board (Mark Leary, Ted Rauh, Bobbie Garcia)  
California State Association of Counties  
The League of California Cities  
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Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors  
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Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County  
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force



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**DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU**  
**CHAIRMAN**

August 13, 2008

Ms. Margo Reid Brown, Chair  
California Integrated Waste Management Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

Dear Ms. Brown:

**DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR THE ORGANIC DIVERSION FACILITIES  
SITING PROJECT (STRATEGIC DIRECTIVE 6.1)**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force, I would like to commend the California Integrated Waste Management Board (Waste Board) for its efforts in promoting environmentally beneficial alternatives to reduce the disposal of organics. However, as listed below, we have a number of concerns regarding the Waste Board's Directive 6.1 and its staff report for Item 11 of the June 17, 2008, Waste Board meeting. On June 10, 2008, this item was considered by the Waste Board's Strategic Policy Development Committee without addressing concerns expressed by stakeholders.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities within Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

We would like to offer the following comments/concerns regarding your staff report on options for siting of organic diversion facilities as well as the Waste Board Strategic Directive 6.1.

**1. The Waste Board needs to define the terms "Organic" and "Compostable Organic"**

The term "organic" is not defined by statute or regulation. Webster's Dictionary defines the term "organic" as: *"of, relating to, or derived from living organisms"* and *"of, relating to, or containing carbon compounds."* As such, based on the Statewide Waste Characterization Study released by the Waste Board in December 2004, the "organic" fraction of solid waste disposed in California landfills ranges between 70 and 80 percent.

The June 17, 2008, Waste Board staff report states that *"Organic materials comprise over 30 percent of the waste stream disposed in California landfills."* This statement is inconsistent with the Waste Board's 2004 Statewide Waste Characterization Study as well as the staff report that was presented to the Waste Board on December 11, 2007. In that report, staff indicated that *"Compostable organic materials comprises approximately 25 percent, or about 10 million tons, of what is disposed in landfills annually, and paper and woody portion of Construction & Demolition debris constitute another 13 or so million tons."* Thus, it appears that Waste Board staff made a distinction between the terms "organic" and "compostable organic," but did not make an attempt to define the terms.

The terms "organic" and "compostable organic" materials need to be clearly defined to avoid confusion among the legislature and regulatory bodies, regulated communities, and local governments that ultimately have to bear the cost. Furthermore, there is a need for the Waste Board to reexamine its Strategic Directive 6.1, which calls for 50 percent reduction in the amount of "organics" being disposed in landfills by 2020. Based on the December 11, 2007, Agenda Item 15, it appears that the goal is focused on the composting/diverting of source separated streams, such as green waste, food waste, manure, etc., and not the total "organics" currently being disposed in landfills. If the latter is true, jurisdictions in California may be faced with achieving a mandatory diversion rate of approximately 85 percent by 2020.

**2. The Waste Board needs to consider the findings of State and local efforts with regards to conversion technology**

The June 17, 2008, Waste Board staff report indicates *"Organic diversion facilities include compost, conversion technology, chipping and grinding, and transfer stations."* The Task Force commends the Waste Board for its recognition and inclusion of conversion technology into the organic diversion facilities category. However, we are disappointed with the Waste Board's staff report and recommendations which fail to recognize the findings of (a) the Waste Board's own three-year study on conversion technologies conducted pursuant to AB 2770, Chapter 740 of the 2002 State Statutes;

Ms. Margo Reid Brown  
August 13, 2008  
Page 3

(b) the conversion technology efforts by the County of Los Angeles; (c) the State Bioenergy Action Plan; and (d) the State Interagency Bioenergy Working Group. Unfortunately, these findings were not considered by the Strategic Policy Development Committee on June 10, 2008. We strongly believe that the Waste Board needs to consider these studies and efforts prior to any further action. This reevaluation will further substantiate that the Waste Board must place a greater reliance on the development and siting of conversion technology facilities rather than focusing on "soft" solutions such as forming more committees and conducting unnecessary duplicative studies.

We would appreciate your written response which would be of great interest to jurisdictions in Los Angeles County as well as those throughout the State. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

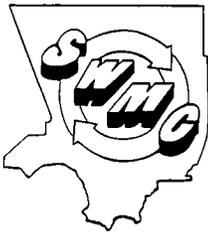
Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and  
Council Member, City of Rosemead

LL:kp  
P:\SEC\Organics Facilities Letter.doc

cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
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Each Member of the California Integrated Waste Management Board  
California Integrated Waste Management Board (Mark Leary, Ted Rauh,  
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DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU  
CHAIRMAN

August 21, 2008

Ms. Margo Reid Brown, Chair  
California Integrated Waste Management Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

Dear Ms. Brown:

### **POLICY OPTIONS TO REDUCE GREEN MATERIAL ALTERNATIVE DAILY COVER**

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force), I respectfully request the California Integrated Waste Management Board (Waste Board) to work with local governments in formulating State policy to reduce green waste alternative daily cover (ADC) since such policies will significantly impact their ability to comply with the State's 50 percent waste reduction mandate and result in other unintended environmental consequences. These options (Item 10 of the June 17, 2008, Waste Board Agenda), were considered by the Waste Board's Strategic Policy Development Committee at its June 10, 2008, meeting. These options included phasing out green waste ADC diversion credit, applying disposal and tipping fees on ADC, using generated revenues from these fees to promote development of composting facilities, as well as possible mandates on local jurisdictions to develop and adopt a 15-year composting capacity element similar to the existing Assembly Bill 939 mandated Siting Element. Unfortunately, these options were developed with virtually no input from cities and counties.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a County-wide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

The use of greenwaste as ADC has numerous environmental and economic benefits, including: preventing the mining and wasting of clean soil that would have otherwise been used as daily cover; conserving landfill capacity, by avoiding an additional cover material layer and the ability of green waste to compact and decompose over time; creating markets for the beneficial use of green waste; maintaining a local outlet for the beneficial use of greenwaste; and, strengthening the curbside collection infrastructure for greenwaste. These benefits are especially important in Southern California since there is inadequate processing capacity for green waste and a limited market for compost made from greenwaste due to difficulties encountered in permitting/developing these types of facilities. This is particularly acute in urban areas due to lack of suitable land, stringent air quality regulations, and community reluctance towards the proximity of such facilities. Even if such facilities were developed elsewhere, greenwaste would still need to be transported over long distances, leading to higher trash rates and added traffic congestion and air pollution.

Because of these significant benefits, in 1996 the Legislature passed Assembly Bill 1647 (Bustamante) to provide unrestricted diversion credit to green waste used as ADC, making a distinction from greenwaste disposed in the landfill. Due to this diversion credit, and because of the benefits listed above, jurisdictions and private industry invested millions of dollars in expensive equipment and infrastructure to implement greenwaste collection and recycling programs which provide for the separate collection of green waste to be used as ADC. Jurisdictions in Southern California and other parts of the state now rely on this infrastructure to manage green waste to maintain compliance with the State's 50 percent waste reduction mandate.

It is for the above reasons that the Task Force requests the Waste Board to work closely with cities, counties and other impacted communities in formulating State policy to reduce green waste ADC, especially those that will be significantly impacted by such policies. Further, while we are supportive of composting, shifting green waste away from ADC towards composting facilities will also result in increased trash rates, air pollution, and traffic congestion in Southern California. The Task Force also has strong reservations regarding the proposal to eliminate ADC diversion credit and thus mandating additional diversion mandates on local jurisdictions without considering the critical resources necessary to successfully meet them. Therefore, we respectfully request the Waste Board redirect its efforts to place a greater emphasis on diverting green materials currently being disposed rather than consuming resources on investigating ways to decrease the beneficial use of green waste as ADC as legitimized by Assembly Bill 1647.

While we share your desire to explore viable green waste management enhancement opportunities we must also consider the feasibility of such options and their relative impact on the operational and economic structures currently in place. Accordingly, it is requested that your Board include this Task Force in further stakeholder discussions to

Ms. Margo Reid Brown  
August 21, 2008  
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a much greater contributive extent in order to develop a more comprehensive set of alternative green waste management options.

We would appreciate your written response which would be of great interest to jurisdictions in Los Angeles County as well as those throughout the State. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Clark*

Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and  
Council Member, City of Rosemead

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cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Cal EPA Secretary, Linda Adams  
Each Member of the California Integrated Waste Management Board  
California Integrated Waste Management Board (Mark Leary, Ted Rauh,  
Bobbie Garcia)  
California State Association of Counties  
The League of California Cities  
The League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division  
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles' Board of Supervisors  
Each City Mayor in Los Angeles County  
South Bay Cities Counsel of Governments  
San Gabriel Valley Counsel of Governments  
Gateway Cities Counsel of Governments  
Southern California Association of Governments  
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County  
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force